

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 10074 220504Z
ACTION SY-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 OCL-00 /022 W
-----127524 220509Z/15

R 220421Z AUG 77
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO AMEMBASSY MANILA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6391

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MANILA/FOR ATO FROM BAGNAL; DEPT FOR SY/OPS/T

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: ASEC
SUBJ: TCU RENOVATIONS - HONG KONG

REF: BAGNAL/LANNING CONVERSATION JULY 21 IN MANILA

1. ON AUGUST 18 SEABEES DUANE GROSS AND JACK LEE CHIPPED AN EIGHT INCH CAVITY INTO ONE OF THE 5 X 7 FOOT BRICKED-IN SECTIONS WHICH ARE TO BE UPGRADED TO MEET VAULT SPECIFICATIONS. THE CENTER OF THE BRICKED PORTION, CONTRARY TO OUR EARLIER BELIEF, CONTAINS SQUARE 5/8 INCH STEEL BARS USED AS REINFORCEMENT BUT ARE NOT INSTALLED ACCORDING TO ACCEPTED STANDARDS. EACH SIDE OF THE BARS CONTAIN 2 X 4 X 8 INCH BRICKS LAYED EDGEWISE IN MORTAR, THUS PROVIDING A MARGINAL SIX INCHES OF WALL PROTECTION. THE BRICKS ARE JUDGED TO HAVE BEEN MADE ABOUT 1960, BUT ARE FASHIONED OF EXTREMELY SOFT CLAY AS WAS THE STYLE AND TECHNIQUE IN THIS AREA CIRCA 1940. THEREFORE, EXCLUDING THE BARS, THE BRICKED AREAS OFFER LITTLE RESISTANCE TO SHATTERING EVEN WITH A CARPENTERS HAMMER.

2. IN ORDER TO PROPERLY MODIFY THESE AREAS TO MEET VAULT STANDARDS IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO REMOVE ALL REINFORCING BARS AND BRICKS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE

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BARS, AND FILL THE AREA WITH CONCRETE AND REINFORCING RODS. THIS WOULD NOT ONLY VISUALLY EXPOSE THE ENTIRE TCU AREA TO THE PUBLIC, BUT WOULD ALSO LEAVE NO PHYSICAL PROTECTION DURING RENOVATIONS. IT IS JUDGED THAT THE CONSULATE GENERAL WOULD NOT AUTHORIZE ANY OUTSIDE STRUCTURAL CHANGES OR MODIFICATIONS WHICH WOULD BE REQUIRED DURING THIS TYPE OF RENOVATIONS.

3. THE ONLY WAY TO REALISTICALLY REMOVE THESE SECTIONS IS TO USE A JACKHAMMER. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS REFINED TECHNIQUE WILL CREATE A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF DUST AND DIRT AND WILL ALSO POSE A PROBLEM NOT ONLY FOR THE SHIELDED ENCLOSURE BUT EVEN MORE SO FOR THE NEARBY ELECTRONICS EQUIPMENT. IF THE ELECTRONICS EQUIPMENT IS PROTECTED WITH A PLASTIC COVER IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE HEAT BUILD-UP INSIDE MAY POSE AN EVEN MORE SERIOUS PROBLEM THAN THE DIRT.

4. A PROPOSED ALTERNATE TO THE CONCRETE IS TO INSTALL WITHIN TCU 1/4 INCH MILD STEEL PLATE TO THE ENTIRE EXTERIOR WALL SURFACES. WHILE THIS MAY APPEAR TO BE EXCESSIVE PROTECTION IT IS JUDGED TO BE THE EASIEST AND THE MOST EXPEDITIOUS METHOD AT THIS TIME. UNDER EITHER PROPOSAL IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO REMOVE ALL EXISTING CHANNELING ON THE WALLS AND REPOSITION ONE EQUIPMENT RACK TEMPORARILY TO CREATE SUFFICIENT WORK SPACE.

5. CONSIDERING ALL RENOVATIONS, INCLUDING THE USE OF STEEL PLATE AND NOT CONCRETE, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT ALL REPAIRS WILL TAKE ABOUT THREE WEEKS, INCLUDING THE ADDITIONAL WORK TO BE DONE INSIDE THE SHIELDED ENCLOSURE. AT YOUR CONVENIENCE IT WILL BE APPRECIATE IF YOU WOULD ADVISE WHICH COURSE OF ACTION YOU PREFER THE RTC TO

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TAKE. FYI THE SEABEES AND I WILL BE IN PEKING FROM AUGUST 20 TO ABOUT SEPT 9 AND WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST YOU IN ANY WAY POSSIBLE IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. PLEASE INFO THE RTC HONG KONG ON ANY COMMUNICATIONS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
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Decapton Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977HONGK10074
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770302-0240
Format: TEL
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770838/aaaabfyu.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION SY
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1530577
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TCU RENOVATIONS - HONG KONG
TAGS: ASEC
To: MANILA
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fa73fa56-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009